

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. For an intervertebral disc replacement device having a flange defining at least one bone screw hole for receipt therethrough of a bone screw and defining at least one mounting hole, a retaining clip, comprising:

a body member having a first side;

a hook flange extending from said body member for clipping retention of said first side of said body member against said flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device; and

at least one lateral flange extending from said body member, partially received over a portion of said bone screw to prevent said bone screw from backing out of said at least one bone screw hole.

2. A retaining clip as recited in claim 1, said at least one lateral flange comprising two lateral flanges extending from said body member in substantially opposite directions, each of said lateral flanges partially received over a portion of a corresponding bone screw to prevent said bone screws from backing out of corresponding bone screw holes existing in said flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device.

3. A retaining clip as recited in claim 1, said body member further comprising at least one attachment member protruding from said first side thereof in communicating relation with said at least one mounting hole of said intervertebral disc replacement device, wherein said at least one attachment member is received within said at least one mounting hole when said hook flange is clippingly retained.

4. A retaining clip as recited in claim 3, said hook flange comprising a clip member protruding therefrom in a direction toward said first side of said body member for receipt within a recess in said flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device.

5. A retaining clip as recited in claim 3, said at least one mounting hole being of a substantially circular diameter and said at least one attachment member being correspondingly, substantially rounded in configuration.

6. A retaining clip as recited in claim 3, said at least one attachment member having a tapered structure such that a protruding extent of the at least one attachment member gradually increasingly protrudes from said first side of said body member, from a lower portion of the protruding extent that is flush with said first side of said body member to an upper portion of the protruding extent that is protruded from said first side of said body member, the gradual increased defining a sloped surface on a convergent path with said first side of said body member, wherein said tapered structure allows easier receipt of said at least one attachment member into said at least one mounting hole.

7. A retaining clip as recited in claim 3, said receipt of said at least one attachment member into said at least one mounting hole is a snapping attachment.

8. A prepackaged, sterile retaining clip assembly for an intervertebral disc replacement device, comprising:

an applicator having first and second applicator arms, each of said first and second applicator arms extending in substantially the same direction out from a common bending elbow;

a first retaining clip removably secured to a first end of said first applicator arm; and

an enclosure for holding said applicator and said at least one retaining clip removably secured thereto.

9. A retaining clip assembly as recited in claim 8, said first applicator arm having a protruding member extending from said first end thereof for removably, secured engagement with an opening extending at least partially into a body member of said first retaining clip

10. A retaining clip assembly as recited in claim 9, further comprising a

second retaining clip removably secured to a first end of said second applicator arm.

11. A retaining clip assembly as recited in claim 10, said second applicator arm having a protruding member extending from said first end thereof for removably, secured engagement with an opening extending at least partially into a body member of said second retaining clip.

12. A retaining clip assembly as recited in claim 8, said enclosure made of a non-permeable material.

13. A retaining clip assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein said enclosure is sealed and devoid of substantially most air so as to maintain said sterile condition of said retaining clip assembly.

14. A retaining clip assembly as recited in claim 13, wherein said enclosure is made of a material that is easily breached for opening of said enclosure and access to said retaining clip assembly.